

Important Information About Changes to Child Care Provider Eligibility Requirements

Introduction

The federal Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Reauthorization Act of 2014 increases the health and safety requirements for all child care and early learning programs that accept child care subsidies. These changes include such provisions as ensuring that all providers are meeting all of the building codes, expanding who must get a criminal background check and requiring staff to take numerous trainings.

There are a number of deadlines for the various requirements. Below are the dates by which various provisions must be completed.

These provisions should have been met by October 1, 2016

Compliance with health, safety, building, state and local laws as demonstrated by:

- Life/Safety Inspection with Department of Children and Families, Office of Licensing (DCF/OOL);
- Current Fire Safety Inspection Certificate; and
- Certificate of Occupancy (CO).

A CO is issued by the town in which the building is located. There are three types of COs:

- E (Educational) for buildings for children 2 ½ years of age and/or older;
- I-4 (Institutional) for buildings for children younger than 2 ½ years of age; or
- A-3 (Assembly) for buildings for school-aged child care programs only (I-4 or E may also be used).

(For existing buildings used as child care centers prior to the adoption of the New Jersey Uniform Construction Code (before 1977), see N.J.A.C. 10:122-Supchapter 5-5.1.)

Things required by March 31, 2017

Ratio and Grouping Requirements

Child care providers must have a certain number of staff for the number of children you are serving. For example, if you are serving infants, you must have one teacher for four children. Under the “grouping requirements,” a specific number of children by age are allowed to be cared for together. To get all of the staffing and grouping requirements, go to N.J.A.C 10:122 – Subchapter 4 – 4.3 and 4.4.

Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases (including immunizations)

Child care providers must meet health requirements around infectious diseases as specified in N.J.A.C 10:122 – Subchapter 7.

Unannounced Inspections

Child care programs will undergo an unannounced inspection every year to see if you are complying with CCDBG requirements as well as state health, safety and fire standards.

Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting Requirement

By New Jersey law, staff is required to report child abuse or neglect if it is suspected. Staff must be trained on this law.

Trainings required by March 31, 2017

Health and Safety Pre-Service Trainings

All teaching staff, providers, caregivers and individuals responsible for the direct care and supervision of children must complete the following health and safety trainings:

- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) - Pediatric
- First Aid - Pediatric
- Prevention and Control of Infectious Disease
- Food and Allergic Reactions (and how to respond)
- Child Abuse and Neglect (includes mandated reporting and child maltreatment)
- Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma
- Safe Sleep and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SUIDS) Prevention
- Administration of Medication
- Safe Spaces (includes building and physical premises safety)
- Handling and Storage of Hazardous Materials
- Emergency Preparedness
- Precautions in Transporting Children (for staff who transport children)
- Child Development

All staff trainings must meet Division of Family Development (DFD) requirements and standards (see www.childcarenj.com) and be documented and on file. New hires (staff hired on, or after, March 31, 2017) must be complete training within two weeks of hire.

Things that must be completed by November 19, 2017

Comprehensive Criminal Background Checks

Under the law, all staff must undergo a comprehensive criminal background check, which includes:

- Search of the state criminal and sex offender registry in the state where the staff member resides and each state where the staff member has resided for the past five years;
- Search of the state child abuse and neglect registry in the state where the staff member resides and each state where the staff member has resided for the past five years;
- Search of the National Crime Information Center;
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) fingerprint check using the Next Generation Identification (which replaced the former Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System); and
- Search of the National Sex Offender Registry.

Child care providers must apply for the background checks by October 1, 2017 to meet this deadline because they take about six weeks to process.

Licensing Requirements

If a child care program wants to accept child care subsidies, they must be licensed through the state Department of Children and Families, Office of Licensing (DCF/OOL) by November 19, 2017. There are many pieces to the licensing process and it will likely take some months to get a license. So start **NOW** to meet this deadline.

For more information on upcoming CCDBG provider requirements go to www.childcarenj.com

Training resources can be found on www.childcarenj.com/providers/training, www.pinjregistry.org or by contacting your local CCR&R